

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 NSC-05 SP-02 INR-05

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PRS-01 /035 W
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O 041706Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9371

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 2938

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, US

SUBJ: MUFTI MEETS, TELLS ALL

1. MET WITH MUFTI SHAYKH HASSAN KHALID AT HIS HOME SATURDAY A.M. LIKE THE OTHER RELIGIOUS LEADERS HIS BRAIN SEEMS TO BE FUNCTIONING A LOT CLEARER THAN THE POLITICOS' ALTHOUGH HE IS HARD-LINER BY COMPARISON TO MARONITE PATRIARCH AND DHIITE IMAM (FOR EXAMPLE, SECULARIZATION OF LEGAL CODE SHOULD STOP SHORT OF APPLYING TO MUSLIMS). ON OTHER HAND, HE CLEARLY SEES NEED FOR MODERATE POLITICAL SOLUTION AND HAS LITTLE USE FOR JUMBLATT'S LEFTISTS.

2. UNFORTUNATELY MUFTI DECIDED TO RELEASE TO PRESS RATHER COMPLETE NOTES TAKEN BY HIS SECRETARY DURING MEETING. SOME OF THE MORE EYEBROW RAISING STATEMENTS HIS INTERPRETER (NOT MINE) SAID I MADE ARE LISTED BELOW (UNOFFICIAL RE-TRANSLATION).

3. A. QUOTE WE CAN HELP WITH A SOLUTION; BUT THE REAL SOLUTION MUST COME FROM HEARTS OF LEBANESE PEOPLE. END QUOTE

B. QUOTE ALL COLONIALISTS, FRENCH, BRITISH, AMERICAN DEPENDED ON A POLICY OF DISCRIMINATION, A DANGEROUS AND INHUMAN POLICY. END QUOTE.

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C. QUOTE I AGREE THERE WAS AN INFLUENCE FROM THE ACTS

OF THE PALESTINIANS; THE PRESENCE OF A STATE WITHIN
A STATE. END QUOTE

D. QUOTE WE ALL AGREE THAT SO LONG AS THE PALESTINE
QUESTION HAS NOT FOUND A JUST SOLUTION THAT IS SATISFACTORY
TO THE PALESTINIANS, THE ARAB STATES WILL FIND THEMSELVES
IN TROUBLE. GIVEN ALL THAT, WE CANNOT SAY THE SOLUTION
TO THE PALESTINE PROBLEM IS NEAR AND A SOLUTION TO THE
LEBANESE PROBLEM CANNOT WAIT. THERE IS SOMETHING
JUST THAT MUST BE DONE AND SOMETHING ELSE THAT IS URGENT.
(ABOVE SENTENCE RHYMES IN CLASSICAL ARABIC AND I'M
NO POET.) WE MUST FIND A SOLUTION TO THE LEBANESE
PROBLEM IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. END QUOTE.

E. QUOTE I AM UNABLE TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE SOLUTION
TO THE PALESTINE PROBLEM BECAUSE I HAVE NOTHING TO DO
WITH IT. BUT STILL IN 1967 WE DESCRIBED THE
PALESTINIANS AS REFUGEES. THIS YEAR THEY SAT IN
THE SECURITY COUNCIL AS EQUALS TO OTHER STATES.
AND TODAY WHAT WE ARE DISCUSSING IN LEBANON AS A
FACTOR IS THE PRESENCE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND
THEIR PROBLEM. NO ONE DENIES THE PALESTINIAN'S ROLE
IN LEBANON, AND RECENTLY THEIR POSITIVE ROLE IN SECUR-
ING A CEASEFIRE. FIVE YEARS AGO THERE WAS NO ONE IN
THE U.S. TO DEFEND THE ARABS BUT NOW ARAB-AMERICANS
HAVE MET THE PRESIDENT TO PRESENT THE PALESTINE QUESTION.
THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT RAISES AN ARAB VOICE
IN AMERICA. UNFORTUNATELY, THE EFFORTS OF THE ARAB STATES
AND THE ARAB LEAGUE IN THE PAST WAS LIMITED, WHICH DID
NOT HELP THE PALESTINE PROBLEM. I WANTED TO ASK YOUR
EMINENCE IF YOU BELIEVE A NATIONAL CONCENSUS SHOULD
FORM AROUND NEW PRESIDENT TO ASSIST IN REBUILDING
LEBANON? END QUOTE.

F. QUOTE I CAN AFFIRM WE ARE STILL IN CONTACT WITH
PRESIDENT ASAD TO CONTINUE SYRIA'S EFFORTS TO BRING
ABOUT PEACE IN THE AREA. I AGREE WITH YOUR EMINENCE'S
DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUES. A QUESTION: DO YOU BELIEVE
LEBANON'S LEADERS CAN AGREE ON A FUTURE PROGRAM AND
SAY TO A NEW PRESIDENT, THIS IS OUR AGREED-UPON
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PROGRAM WHICH YOU MUST IMPLEMENT.END QUOTE.

G. QUOTE IN MY BEING HERE I AGREE WITH YOU
(I.E., THE LEBANESE ARE ARABS.) END QUOTE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, CIVIL DISORDERS, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: vogelfj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT02938
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760127-0110
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760499/aaaadhdw.tel
Line Count: 112
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: vogelfj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2004 by vogelfj>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MUFTI MEETS, TELLS ALL
TAGS: PFOR, LE, US, (KHALID, HASSAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006